

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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CIAE-00 H-01 INR-10 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9298
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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
USDEL MBFR VIENNA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 01543

BELGRADE FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, CSCE
SUBJECT: CSCE/CBMS: THE QUESTION OF A POST-BELGRADE
EXPERTS MEETING

REF: BELGRADE 1129 (DTG 111130Z FEB 78)

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SUMMARY: WE SEE DRAWBACKS TO A PACKAGE DEAL THAT WOULD
INCLUDE REMISSION OF SOME CBMS ISSUES TO A POST-BELGRADE
EXPERTS GROUP, AND PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING VIEWS AS A CON-
TRIBUTION TO WASHINGTON'S CONSIDERATION OF THE TACTICAL
QUESTIONS RAISED REFTEL. END SUMMARY.

1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONFIDENCE BUILDING IN THE CSCE
CONTEXT IS A LONG-TERM PROCESS. WITH EXCELLENT SUPPORT
FROM US AND ALLIED MILITARY AUTHORITIES, THE ALLIED CBMS
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PROGRAM HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED SINCE HELSINKI.
THE RECENT SOVIET INVITATION TO "BEREZINA" AND SOVIET
ACCEPTANCE OF ALLIED INVITATIONS THIS SUMMER ARE FAVOR-
ABLE INDICATIONS OF GRADUALLY INCREASING SOVIET PARTIC-
IPATION. HOWEVER, WITH ONLY TWO AND A HALF YEARS
EXPERIENCE, CSCE PARTICIPANTS ARE STILL AT THE STAGE OF
GAINING EXPERIENCE ON HOW TO IMPLEMENT CBMS, AND THERE

IS MUCH THAT THEY CAN DO UNDER THE TERMS OF THE FINAL ACT TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM OF THIS PROGRAM.

2. THUS, WHILE WE BELIEVE IT marginally useful to broaden CBMS provisions, in accordance with allied proposals advanced at Belgrade, we do not consider early adoption of new provisions essential to an expanding CBMS program. We see no benefit in seeking the adoption of additional provisions in a separate experts meeting in 1979 when -- if the Soviets are ready -- these measures can be negotiated at the Madrid meeting in 1980.

3. THE SUBSTANCE OF ALLIED PROPOSALS aimed essentially at lowering the notification threshold, earlier notification, improving the content of notifications, better treatment of observers and notification of movements. The US agreed to notification of movements, not because the US saw intrinsic benefits in such a measure, but in the hope of eliciting NNA support in other areas (77 STATE 197382). NATO military authorities have expressed reservations about a limitation on maneuvers (NATO 461). The substantive merits of these proposals are not sufficient, in our view, to justify a change in the scepticism the US has expressed regarding a CBMS experts meeting (NATO 419).

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4. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT, WHATEVER THE SUGGESTED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A FOLLOW-UP EXPERTS GROUP, THE SOVIETS WOULD AGGRESSIVELY SEEK TO MAKE IT A FOCAL POINT FOR THE SECURITY TOPICS THEY HAVE SOUGHT TO PROMOTE IN CSCE. THE SOVIETS HAVE RECENTLY SOUGHT TO BLUR THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SECURITY CONSULTATIONS THEY ARE PROPOSING AND A POST-BELGRADE CBMS EXPERT WORKING GROUP, AND CURRENT SOVIET STONEWALLING COULD BE FOLLOWED, IN THE CRUNCH, BY HINTS OF "FUTURE" SOVIET FLEXIBILITY IF BELGRADE PARTICIPANTS WILL AGREE TO SECURITY/CBMS CONSULTATIONS. THE SOVIETS HAVE ASKED THE SWEDES TO PREPARE A PAPER ON A POST-BELGRADE WORKING GROUP (PARA 5 REFTEL). WHILE THIS TACTIC MAY AIM AT SETTING THE ALLIES UP FOR THE BLAME IF THEY DO NOT ACCEPT SUCH A WORKING GROUP, IT ALSO COULD PROVIDE AN OPENING FOR THE SOVIETS TO INSIST ON EXPANDING THE MANDATE AND THUS ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVE THEY HAVE PURSUED SO LONG OF A SPECIAL MEETING EMBRACING SECURITY ISSUES.

5. WE NOTE SOVIET EFFORTS TO DOWNGRADE BELGRADE AND TO REFER ELSEWHERE SUBJECTS THAT SHOULD BE DEALT WITH IN CSCE REVIEW MEETINGS. IF THE SOVIETS SUCCEED IN THIS EFFORT, THE IMPACT OF THE MADRID MEETING IN REVIEWING IMPLEMENTATION AND EX-

AMINING NEW PROPOSALS, AND THE COHERENCE OF THE CSCE PROCESS, WILL BE DIMINISHED.

6. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE POSSIBLE TRADE-OFFS BETWEEN SECURITY/CBMS ISSUES AND OTHER US AND ALLIED OBJECTIVES IN CSCE. BUT WE WOULD BE CAUTIOUS ABOUT TRADE-OFFS THAT GIVE THE SOVIETS A PROCEDURAL TOEHOLD ON SPECIAL SECURITY/CBMS CONSULTATIONS. AN EXPERTS MEETING IN THIS FIELD COULD ENTAIL DISCUSSION OF ISSUES WITH IMPLICATIONS BEYOND THE SHARP FOCUS THE ALLIES HAVE MAINTAINED ON DEVELOPING CSCE CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES.

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7. REFTEL SUGGESTS NO FORMULA FOR A POST-BELGRADE WORK ON CBMS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE SOVIETS AND TO NATO. IF THE ISSUE, THEN, IS ONE OF MAINTAINING A CONSTRUCTIVE ALLIED POSTURE ON CBMS, WE BELIEVE THERE IS AMPLE ARGUMENTATION SHORT OF ACCEPTANCE IN PRINCIPLE OF A SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP MEETING.

8. WE BELIEVE THE US SHOULD ACTIVELY DISCOURAGE A POST-BELGRADE CBMS EXPERTS MEETING RATHER THAN ADOPTING THE APPROACH OUTLINED IN PARA 6 REFTEL. THE FORTHCOMING ALLIED PROPOSALS ON CBMS AT BELGRADE, THE ALLIED RECORD IN CBMS IMPLEMENTATION, THE PROSPECT OF REVIEWING THIS SUBJECT AGAIN AT MADRID, THE LACK OF SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE

AT BELGRADE, THE DESIRABILITY OF MAINTAINING THE FOCUS BETWEEN FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS ON IMPLEMENTATION AND THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE COHERENCE OF THE CSCE PROCESS, PROVIDE, IN OUR VIEW, A SOLID BASIS FOR DEFENDING THE ALLIED POSITION IN THIS FIELD AND FOR DEFLECTING SOVIET EFFORTS TO BLAME THE
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ALLIES FOR LACK OF PROGRESS. BENNETT

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